

News

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****Dallas' Davis quints to celebrate
10th birthday July 18.

NOTE: The press is invited to attend a tenth birthday party for the Davis quints, July 18 from 10:30-11:30 a.m., at the health science center's Faculty Club. A photo availability time, to be held in the Special Care Nursery at Parkland Memorial Hospital, will follow the party.

DALLAS--Meeting reporters three days after giving birth to the Texas' first quintuplets, a beaming 20-year-old Debbie Davis was quoted as saying, "I am probably thinking too far in the future. But what are we going to do about the prom with all those girls?"

The Davis quints, four girls and a boy, were born over a six-minute time span on July 18, 1975 to the Lewisville woman and her 21-year-old husband, Jerry Davis. Jerry was then a mechanic earning \$175 a week. They named their son Casey and chose the names of Chelsa, Charla, Chanda and Christa for the girls.

The Davis' doctors consisted of an obstetrical and pediatric team from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas led by professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology Dr. Jack Pritchard and Dr. Charles Rosenfeld, professor of Pediatrics and of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Soon after the birth at Parkland Memorial Hospital, the doctors reported the children were in "good" condition, predicting their chances for survival were better than 50-50. Nearly nine weeks premature and delivered by Caesarian Section, the babies ranged in weight from one pound, 14 ounces to three pounds, 10 ounces (the boy). Three of the infants, including the boy and two girls, experienced mild respiratory distress for a brief period.

This year the quints celebrate their tenth birthday, all five are developing beautifully.

This year also marks the tenth anniversary of the Special Care Nursery at Parkland. Without the special care neonatal facility, as well as the high risk pregnancy unit that Debbie entered more than two weeks before the multiple birth, the chances of any of the infants' surviving was very close to zero, according to Pritchard.

When the special care neonatal unit first opened several months before the quints were born, it was a four-bassinets intensive care facility, says Rosenfeld, director of Nurseries at Parkland. The number of bassinets had risen to six by the summer, but suddenly the facility had to almost double to accommodate the quints. Nine doctors and three nurses were on hand to insert the intravenous tubes for food and attach the lines for monitoring of heart and respiration rates, blood pressure, blood gases and oxygen concentration.

Today Parkland has an 85-bassinets Special Care Nursery, often

(more)

add one--quints tenth birthday

operating at 100 percent occupancy. The unit handles more high risk neonates than any other hospital in North Central Texas, nearly 1,500 admissions annually--450 of whom will require intensive care--in order to meet a growing demand, says Rosenfeld. Now there are four designated stages of care--intensive care, intermediate or accute care, admission or triage and continuing care for low-birth-weight, pre-term babies.

In Debbie's case, the doctors tending her hoped to be able to wait longer before delivery. But her pregnancy was complicated by preeclampsia, characterized by high blood pressure and kidney impairment. In Parkland's unit for expectant mothers, she was closely monitored while kept at complete bed rest. When her condition worsened, Pritchard made the decision to operate the next day.

Debbie had taken only five tablets of the fertility drug Clomid when she became pregnant. She was expecting quadruplets up until delivery. "I was first to be aware of the fifth one," said Pritchard. "I put my hand in to remove the afterbirth, and I felt the bottom of another baby."

Said father Jerry at the press conference soon after the birth, "I've had all the excitement I can take in one lifetime. I wouldn't want to put her through it again, and I wouldn't want to go through it again myself."

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